

Dear Human Services Committee,

I am here today in support of SB 391, *An Act Concerning the Recoupment of State Costs Attributable to Low Wage Employers*. I strongly believe that the passage of this bill is necessary to support working families all across our state. Connecticut's largest, for-profit corporations are, too often, paying wages so low that employees cannot meet their families' basic living needs.

Implementing the low wage employer fee will go a long way in these trying times. Workers who earn less than \$15 per hour in Connecticut simply do not earn enough for their families to live on, and they often must rely on state-funded health care, child care, and other important services. As a result, Connecticut's taxpayers are subsidizing the huge profits of these large corporations.

My sisters and I own Hartford Prints!, a local urban goods store here in Hartford. We founded our company in 2012. As a small business owner in Hartford, I consider myself a valuable link in the community. As taxpayers we are facing the brunt of low wages from large employers. The businesses who play by the rules and pay living wages deserve a level playing field rather than paying the difference.

In the states with fair wages and accountable business communities, they have seen an overall growth in the economy and job sector. This policy will help create a stable environment that will be attractive to potential employees, particularly highly-educated millennials entering the workforce who value policies that implement fair wages.

Please do the right thing and pass SB 221 and allow Connecticut the opportunity to be a leader on fair wages.

Sincerely,

Rory Gale, Hartford